

## GAO Report on 2004 Election fraud

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### GAO report upholds Ohio vote fraud claims

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By Joe Baker, Senior Editor

As if the indictment of Lewis “Scooter” Libby wasn’t enough to give the White House some heavy concerns, a report from the Government Accounting Office takes a big bite out of the Bush clique’s pretense of legitimacy. This powerful and probing report takes a hard look at the election of 2004 and supports the contention that the election was stolen. The report has received almost no coverage in the national media.

The GAO is the government’s lead investigative agency, and is known for rock-solid integrity and its penetrating and thorough analysis. The agency’s agreement with what have been brushed aside as “conspiracy theories” adds even more weight to the conclusion that the Bush regime has no business in the White House whatever.

Almost a year ago, Rep. John Conyers, senior Democrat on the House Judiciary Committee, asked the GAO to investigate the use of electronic voting machines in the Nov. 2, 2004, presidential election. That request was made as a flood of protests from Ohio and elsewhere deluged Washington with claims that shocking irregularities were common in that vote and were linked to the machines.

CNN said the Judiciary Committee got more than 57,000 complaints after Bush’s claimed re-election. Many were made under oath in a series of statements and affidavits in public hearings and investigations carried out in Ohio by the Free Press and other groups seeking to maintain transparent elections.

Online Journal.com reported that the GAO report stated that “some of [the] concerns about electronic voting machines have been realized and have caused problems with recent elections, resulting in the loss and miscount of votes.”

This is the only democratic nation that permits private partisan companies to count and tabulate the vote in secret, using privately-held software. The public is excluded from the process. Rev. Jesse Jackson and others have declared that “public elections must not be conducted on privately-owned machines.” The makers of nearly all electronic voting machines are owned by conservative Republicans.

The chief executive of Diebold, one of the major suppliers of electronic voting machines, Warren “Wally” O’Dell, went on record in the 2004 campaign vowing to deliver Ohio and the presidency to George W. Bush.

In Ohio, Bush won by only 118,775 votes out of more than 5.6 million cast. Honest election advocates contend that O’Dell’s statement to hand Ohio’s vote to Bush still stands as a clear indictment of an apparently successful effort to steal the White House.

Some of the GAO’s findings are: 1. Some electronic voting machines “did not encrypt cast ballots or system audit logs, and it was possible to alter both without being detected.” In short, the machines; provided a way to manipulate the outcome of the election. In Ohio, more than 800,000 votes were cast on electronic voting machines, some registered seven times Bush’s official margin of victory.

2: the report further stated that: “it was possible to alter the files that define how a ballot looks and works, so that the votes for one candidate could be recorded for a different candidate.” Very many sworn statements and affidavits claim that did happen in Ohio in 2004.

Next, the report says, “Vendors installed uncertified versions of voting system software at the local level.” The GAO found that falsifying election results without leaving evidence of doing so by using altered memory cards could easily be done.

The GAO additionally found that access to the voting network was very easy to compromise because not all electronic voting systems had supervisory functions protected by password. That meant access to one machine gave access to the whole network. That critical finding showed that rigging the election did not take a “widespread conspiracy” but simply the cooperation of a small number of operators with the power to tap into the networked machines. They could thus alter the vote totals at will. It therefore was no big task for a single programmer to flip vote numbers to give Bush the 118,775 votes.

Another factor in the Ohio election was that access to the voting network was also compromised by repeated use of the same user ID, coupled with easy-to-guess passwords. Even amateur hackers could have gotten into the network and changed the vote.

System locks were easily picked, and keys were easy to copy, so gaining access to the system was a snap.

One digital machine model was shown to have been networked in such a rudimentary manner that if one machine experienced a power failure, the entire network would go down. That is too fragile a system to decide the presidency of the United States.

Problems obviously exist with security protocols and screening methods for vendor personnel.

The GAO study clearly shows that no responsible business would operate with a computer system as flimsy, fragile and easily manipulated as the one used in the 2004 election.

These findings are even more damning when we understand the election in Ohio was run by a secretary of state who also was co-chairman of Bush’s Ohio campaign. Far from the conclusion of anti-fraud skeptics, the GAO’s findings confirm that the network, which handled 800,000 Ohio votes, was vulnerable enough to permit a handful of purposeful operatives to turn the entire election by means of personal computers using comparatively simple software.

One Ohio campaign operative, Tom Noe, a coin dealer, was indicted Oct. 27 for illegally funneling \$45,400 to Bush by writing checks to others, who then wrote checks to Bush’s re-election campaign, allegedly dodging the \$2,000 limit on contributions by an individual.

“It’s one of the most blatant and excessive finance schemes we have encountered,” said Noel Hillman, section chief of the U.S. Department of Justice’s public integrity section, as quoted in the Kansas City Star.

In the 2000 election, Florida was the key; in the 2004 election, Ohio was the key.

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